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FIFTH COMMITTEE  
Agenda item 116

PROGRAMME PLANNING

Some perspectives on the work of the United Nations  
in the 1990s

Note by the Chairman

1. In paragraph 103 of the report of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC) on its resumed twenty-seventh session (A/42/16 (Part II)), which forms part of the documentation for agenda item 116 (Programme planning), CPC recommends that the General Assembly, through its Main Committees, should consider at its forty-second session the paper entitled "Some perspectives on the work of the United Nations in the 1990s" included in the note by the Secretary-General on the preparation of the next medium-term plan (A/42/512), together with a summary of the preliminary views expressed by members of CPC (A/42/16 (Part II), paras. 86-99), as part of the process of ensuring the full participation of Member States in the preparation of the introduction to the next medium-term plan, as mandated by the Assembly in resolution 41/213.
2. On 12 October 1987 the Chairman of the Fifth Committee addressed identical letters, through the President of the General Assembly, to the chairmen of the other Main Committees transmitting the above-mentioned recommendation of CPC and indicating that it would be appreciated if the views which the Main Committees might wish to express on the paper entitled "Some perspectives on the work of the United Nations in the 1990s" could be communicated to the Fifth Committee no later than the first week of November 1987 in order to permit the Fifth Committee to take those views fully into account.
3. The following replies have been received by the Chairman of the Fifth Committee.

A. From the Chairman of the First Committee

"I have the honour to refer to your letter, dated 12 October 1987 requesting the First Committee to communicate to the Fifth Committee its views on the paper entitled "Some perspectives on the work of the United Nations in the 1990s", included in the note by the Secretary-General on the preparation of the next medium-term plan (A/42/512), together with a summary of the preliminary views expressed by members of CPC (A/42/16 (Part II), paras. 86-99), as part of the process of ensuring the full participation of Member States in the preparation of the introduction to the next medium-term plan, as mandated by the Assembly in resolution 41/213.

"I wish to inform you that the content of the communication received from you was brought to the attention of the First Committee (A/C.1/42/6).

"In view of the importance and sensitivity of the subject-matter involved, and due to the forthcoming third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament which is expected to set up further guidelines in the field of disarmament, the Committee is not, at this stage, in a position to express definitive views. Further, the members of the Committee would like to have more time at their disposal in order to give greater consideration to this issue and to consult their respective capitals. It has been agreed that the Committee will be in a better position to assess the situation more fully at the forty-third session of the General Assembly next year."

B. From the Chairman of the Special Political Committee

"I have the honour to refer to your letter dated 12 October 1987 (A/SPC/42/L.5) concerning programme planning, in which you requested the views of the Special Political Committee on the Secretary-General's submission entitled "Some perspectives on the work of the United Nations in the 1990s" included in this note on the preparation of the next medium-term plan (A/42/512).

"I wish to inform you that this matter was brought to the attention of the Special Political Committee at its 5th meeting, on 19 October 1987, with the request that any members of the Committee wishing to express their views should do so by 4 November 1987. Subsequently, the Committee concurred in the request of some delegations to extend that deadline until 18 November 1987.

"I have the honour to transmit to you the two communications which I have received in that connection, namely, a letter dated 11 November 1987 from the Permanent Representative of Poland to the United Nations, on behalf of the delegations of Bulgaria, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Viet Nam; and a letter dated 18 November 1987 from the Permanent Representative of Guatemala to the United Nations, in his capacity as Chairman of the Group of 77. Copies of the two communications are herewith attached for the attention of the Fifth Committee (see A/SPC/42/L.22)."

C. From the Chairman of the Second Committee

"I have the honour to refer to your letter of 12 October 1987 requesting the views of the Second Committee on the paper entitled "Some perspectives on the work of the United Nations in the 1990s", included in the note by the Secretary-General on the preparation of the next medium-term plan (A/42/512).

"Delegations welcomed the opportunity to comment on the paper submitted by the Secretary-General, which was considered by the Second Committee at its 28th and 29th meetings on 4 and 6 November 1987. The relevant summary records of the Second Committee are contained in A/C.2/42/SR.28 and 29.

"In addition to the comments reflected in the summary records, it is the understanding of the Second Committee that there will be a further opportunity for Member States to comment further on the paper, formally or informally, as part of the consultative process in formulating the introduction to the next medium-term plan called for in General Assembly resolution 41/213."

D. From the Chairman of the Third Committee

"I have the honour to refer to your letter of 12 October 1987 in which you asked for the Third Committee's views on the paper entitled "Some perspectives on the work of the United Nations in the 1990s" included in the note by the Secretary-General on the preparation of the next medium-term plan (A/42/512), together with a summary of the preliminary views expressed by members of CPC (see A/42/16 (Part II), paras. 86-99).

"In accordance with the Third Committee's decision you will find attached a copy of the statement read by the representative of Guatemala, in his capacity as Chairman of the Group of 77, and the summary record of the 40th meeting of the Third Committee (see A/C.3/42/SR.40, paras. 29-53). There was general agreement in the Committee that the note of the Secretary-General (A/42/512) needed deeper study and it was felt that delegations could study it and report back on it at the next session of the General Assembly."

E. From the Chairman of the Fourth Committee

"I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 12 October 1987, in which you requested the views of the Fourth Committee on the Secretary-General's submission entitled "Some perspectives on the work of the United Nations in the 1990s" included in his note on the preparation of the next medium-term plan (A/42/512).

"At its 16th meeting on 20 October 1987, the Fourth Committee decided to invite members wishing to submit their views on the above documentation to do so in writing. I wish to inform you in that connection that I have received two communications, submitted in accordance with that decision: a letter dated 28 October 1987 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United

Nations and another letter, dated 30 October 1987, from the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations, in his capacity as Chairman of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. Copies of the two communications are herewith attached for the attention of the Fifth Committee [see annexes I and II respectively]."

F. From the Chairman of the Sixth Committee

"I have the honour to refer to your letter dated 12 October 1987 concerning agenda item 116 "Programme Planning", in which you requested the views of the Sixth Committee on the note entitled "Some perspectives on the work of the United Nations in the 1990s" included in the note by the Secretary-General on the preparation of the next medium-term plan (A/42/512).

"I wish to inform you that this matter was brought to the attention of the Sixth Committee at a meeting on 27 October 1987 and at the same meeting, the text of your letter was communicated to the chairmen of the regional groups of the Committee for comments.

"I have the honour to transmit to you, with the consent of the Sixth Committee, the two communications which I have received in that connection, namely, a letter dated 16 November 1987 from the Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations, in his capacity as Chairman of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States for the month of November 1987; and a letter dated 20 November 1987 from the representative of the United States in the Sixth Committee, in his capacity as Chairman of the Group of Western European and Other States of the Sixth Committee. Copies of these two letters are enclosed for the attention of the Fifth Committee [see annexes III and IV]."

Annex ILETTER DATED 28 OCTOBER 1987 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF CUBA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE  
FOURTH COMMITTEE

[Original: Spanish]

In accordance with your instructions to the Fourth Committee, and after studying the note entitled "Some perspectives on the work of the United Nations in the 1990s" (A/42/512), we find that it does not contain any reference to the decolonization process under the auspices of the Organization or to the colonial situation still prevailing in some Territories in various parts of the world.

The delegation of Cuba feels that this most important aspect of the work of the United Nations should be reflected in the perspectives on the work of the Organization in the 1990s. From the discussions in our Committee, we see that decolonization is still moving slowly in some Territories; in others, such as Namibia, the Sahara and the Malvinas, there is no certainty that the problem will be settled by the beginning of the decade, which is only two years away. Furthermore, we cannot consider the work of decolonization finished until every Territory still under foreign domination achieves the status chosen by the majority of its population, without pressures of any kind.

In view of the foregoing, we reiterate our belief that the general work of decolonization should be reflected in the overall programme of the Organization for the 1990s.

(Signed) Oscar ORAMAS OLIVA  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative

Annex II

LETTER DATED 30 OCTOBER 1987 FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SPECIAL  
COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION  
OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO  
COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES ADDRESSED TO THE CHAIRMAN OF  
THE FOURTH COMMITTEE

[Original: English]

In accordance with a decision taken by the Fourth Committee at its 16th meeting, on 20 October 1987, concerning the submission by the Secretary-General entitled "Some perspectives on the work of the United Nations in the 1990s" (A//42/512), under agenda item 116, I wish, in my capacity as Chairman of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and, on the basis of the consultations I held in that regard with Committee officers and a number of other members, to convey to you their serious concern at the conspicuous absence of any reference to the tasks remaining in the process of decolonization from the issues that would likely require the attention of the United Nations during the time frame of the next medium-term plan, 1990-1995.

The accomplishments of the past four decades in bringing the process of decolonization closer to its completion cannot hide the fact that it is nevertheless an important area where the United Nations will continue, under the Charter, to bear a responsibility until all colonial Territories have been able freely to determine their future status. Of the 19 remaining colonial Territories, Namibia, for which the United Nations has accepted direct responsibility, continues to be one of the most intractable problems confronting the Organization. Despite the renewed efforts of the international community, prospects for the immediate independence of the Territory appear as remote as ever. Until Namibia's accession to independence, the United Nations will continue to be responsible for the well-being of the Namibian people, for the provision of material and other assistance to them and for supporting all aspects of their efforts towards self-determination and independence.

With respect to other Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories, the United Nations organs concerned will continue to review the extent of compliance with the relevant provisions of the Charter by Member States responsible for their administration and to follow closely developments in those Territories with a view to the full and speedy implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

In order to ensure that due account is taken of the foregoing considerations by the United Nations bodies concerned when they formulate the medium-term plan and

that the necessary budgetary provisions are made for the continuing activities of the Organization in the field of decolonization, I would be grateful if these views could be communicated to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee for the attention of its members, for appropriate action.

(Signed) Tesfaye TADESSE

Chairman

Special Committee on the Situation  
with regard to the Implementation  
of the Declaration on the Granting  
of Independence to Colonial  
Countries and Peoples

Annex III

LETTER DATED 16 NOVEMBER 1987 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF ARGENTINA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF  
LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN STATES, ADDRESSED TO THE CHAIRMAN  
OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE

[Original: Spanish]

I have the honour, in my capacity as Chairman of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States for the month of November, to refer to the consultations carried out with the various regional groups regarding the Secretary-General's note concerning the preparation of the next medium-term plan (A/42/512).

On a preliminary basis and without prejudice to the views which Governments may express in the course of the consultations which are to be held on the subject of the next plan, I wish to inform you that the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States of the Sixth Committee believes that in this document the reference to international law is quite inadequate. The Group believes that the Sixth Committee should point out that the codification and progressive development of international law should be adequately included in the United Nations programmes for the next medium-term plan.

(Signed) Marcelo E. R. DELPECH  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative



Annex IV

LETTER DATED 20 NOVEMBER 1987 FROM THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF WESTERN EUROPEAN AND OTHER STATES OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE ADDRESSED TO ITS CHAIRMAN

[Original: English]

The Western European and Other States of the Sixth Committee is not prepared at this time to comment on the medium-term plan beyond noting that it attaches continuing importance to the timely publication of important documents of particular interest, including: the Juridical Yearbook, the Repertory and Repertoire and the United Nations Treaty Series.

(Signed) Robert ROSENSTOCK  
Chairman, Western European and  
Other States of the Sixth Committee

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